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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT SELECTS JUSTICE MARY ANN MCMORROW TO  
SUCCEED MOSES W. HARRISON AS CHIEF JUSTICE**

SPRINGFIELD, IL – The Supreme Court of Illinois unanimously elected on Tuesday Justice Mary Ann G. McMorrow to replace Moses W. Harrison II as Chief Justice upon his retirement. Her three-year tenure will begin Sept. 5, 2002 and terminate Sept. 4, 2005.

Justice McMorrow, a former justice of the Illinois Appellate Court who was elected to the Supreme Court in 1992, will become the first woman to serve as Chief Justice of the Illinois High Court.

“I feel very privileged and honored, and humbled by it,” said Justice McMorrow. “I have great admiration for my colleagues and I’m confident we’ll have a very progressive Court. I thank Chief Justice Harrison for all his leadership.”

In a related action, the Supreme Court also named Justice Robert R. Thomas chairman of the Illinois Courts Commission to replace Justice McMorrow in that position when she becomes Chief Justice. The Illinois Courts Commission is a constitutionally established body which sits as a court in the discipline of judges.

Her election as Chief Justice by her colleagues is another in a series of firsts for Justice McMorrow in pioneering opportunities for women in the law.

She was the only woman in her graduating class at Loyola University School of Law in 1953. She was elected class president and associate editor of the law review.

She also was the first woman to prosecute major criminal cases in the Cook County State’s Attorney’s office and became the first woman elected to the Illinois Supreme Court.

Although she was the second woman to serve on the Illinois Appellate Court, she was the first to be elected Chairperson of the Executive Committee of the Appellate Court.

“I know Justice McMorrow well as we’ve served together on the Court since December of 1992,” said Chief Justice Harrison. “She is simply an outstanding jurist, a great student of the law and very capable.

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“Mary Ann McMorrow will reflect well on the Court. She is a very caring person and her approach is that of applying the law to the facts. It does not involve any gender consideration. She is simply a good lawyer and that’s the highest compliment I can pay and judge.

“All the members of the Court are thrilled to have her as Chief Justice and she will provide true leadership.”

After a career in the state’s attorney’s office where she entered the rough-and-tumble, then-all-male world of prosecuting major felony cases, she was elected to the Circuit Court of Cook County in 1976.

She was appointed to the Illinois Appellate Court by the Supreme Court in 1985 and won election to the appellate bench the following year. She was elected to the Supreme Court in 1992 and is seeking retention to another 10-year term in the November election.

Justice McMorrow is the recipient of numerous awards, including the Medal of Excellence from the Loyola University School of Law Alumni Association; the Freedom Award from John Marshall School of Law and the Illinois State Bar Association’s Fellows Award for Distinguished Service to Law and Society.

Justice McMorrow is a past president of the Women’s Bar Association of Illinois and recipient of its highest award, the Myra Bradwell Woman of Achievement Award, name for the first woman lawyer in Illinois.

She is a member or former member of several bar associations and judicial boards and associations.

She was a faculty adviser at the National Judicial College in Reno, Nevada, and has often served as a faculty member at Illinois Judicial conferences. She has lectured extensively in seminars and symposiums for judges, lawyers, social workers, psychiatrists and students, and has been active in community programs.

She is a lifelong resident of Chicago, a widow and the mother of one daughter.

Chief Justice Harrison, whose three-year term as chief was to run to Dec. 31, 2002, announced Monday that he was retiring from the Court for personal reasons, effective Sept. 4.

The Chief Justice serves as the chief administrative officer of the statewide judicial system, with supervisory authority over more than 900 judges.

Among other things, the Chief Justice controls and schedules the agenda as to what will be brought for consideration in conference by the Court; assigns cases for proposed opinions,

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decides which cases will be argued and when before the Court; supervises all appointments to the Supreme Court committees; and also serves as chairperson of the Executive Committee of the constitutionally mandated Illinois Judicial Conference. The Conference, among other matters, sets and sponsors much of the judicial education agenda and courses for Illinois judges.

The Chief Justice also serves as the public face of the Court, appearing at many functions as the representative of the Court.